2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

27 May 2005

Original: English

New York, 2-27 May 2005

Message by the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, to the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a seminal instrument in the field of global, multilateral non-proliferation. While specifically addressing the threats posed by the spread of nuclear arms, it also embodies the overarching aim of its Signatories to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The Treaty's periodic reviews mark milestones along the path of development of the international community's resolve to achieve the Treaty's noble objectives. The significance and relevance of these goals is clearly demonstrated by the Treaty's commendable status of participation, counting namely 189 States among its Signatories.

Since their invention in the previous century, the latent threat posed by nuclear weapons has always represented one of the paramount dangers confronting mankind's survival. The Review Conference of 1995 recognized the consequences and complexity of the issues at hand. Unanimously, the parties agreed to permanently and unconditionally extend the Treaty's duration, establishing the basis for continued, positive collaboration in dealing with the challenges posed by the task of preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons and ultimately achieving nuclear disarmament.

The effective and universal implementation of all disarmament agreements represents a cornerstone of international security and has been recognized as such. In a time when global terrorism has added a new dimension in the array of threats which the international community is addressing, the Treaty also serves to build a credible defense against the terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction. The recent adoption by the UN General Assembly of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism is a further indication of the international community's will to deny any avenue to those attempting to use these weapons to kill and injure en masse.

These activities are also part and parcel of the long-term, international commitment to place all categories of weapons of mass destruction under strict

05-38787 (E) 210605

control, eventually leading to their elimination. In this endeavour, the implementing agencies of their respective treaties, the IAEA and the OPCW, share common goals.

The 168 Member States of the OPCW implement the Chemical Weapons Convention by declaring, securing, and destroying, under international on-site verification, any chemical weapons stockpiles. All chemical weapons production capacity must be inactivated and subsequently destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes, subject to stringent verification by the OPCW. Relevant chemical industrial activity on the territory of all States Parties is to be declared and, in compliance with the Convention, is subject to on-site verification.

Finally, all States Parties are obliged to apply transfer restrictions and controls to those chemicals listed under the Convention. States that are party to the Convention renounce forever the development, production, stockpiling, use or transfer of chemical weapons, while pledging to never engage in any military preparations for their use. Moreover, no State Party may assist or induce anyone to breach this Convention.

Disarmament under the CWC sets an example for practical, incremental, and verifiable elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, wherein States Parties act as partners and where technical and financial support is provided by other States as well as by the OPCW.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons represents the only international instrument to limit the spread of the most destructive weapons ever conceived. At the same time, the Treaty is an instrument for promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in particular the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear technology, which, were it to be diverted for illicit purposes would represent a serious threat to the international peace and security.